

U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson (MO-08) and five other Missouri members of Congress sent a letter of support to President Obama following up on Missouri Governor Jay Nixon's January 18 request for a federal disaster declaration for nine Missouri counties and the City of St. Louis which were affected by strong storms and tornadoes.

"Sadly, these storms took the lives of five Missourians. This was a very serious event," Emerson said. "There is a tremendous amount of debris which needs to be removed and a tremendous strain on the affected communities. We're requesting as swift a review of the Governor's request as FEMA can provide."

Emerson surveyed the damage on the Monday following the events in Phelps and Dent County. She expects a decision will be available from the Federal Emergency Management Agency soon. The text of the letter, which was also signed by Reps. Todd Akin, Russ Carnahan, William "Lacy" Clay, Vicky Hartzler, Blaine Luetkemeyer and Billy Long, is below.

January 20, 2011

The Honorable Barack Obama  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW  
Washington, DC 20502

Dear President Obama:

We are writing in support of Governor Nixon's request for a major disaster declaration for Missouri counties as a result of the severe storms and hail in Central and Southern Missouri from December 30 and December 31, 2010.

As you are aware, these severe storms brought damaging winds, tornadoes and hail in nine counties and the City of St. Louis. These storms caused five deaths and several storm-related injuries. Additionally, residents in these counties experienced severe personal and commercial property damage. As these communities work to rebuild, we would appreciate your swift review and approval of emergency Individual Assistance (including the Individuals and Households Program, Disaster Unemployment Assistance and Crisis Counseling), Hazard Mitigation, and Small Business Administration disaster loans request for nine counties and the independent City of St. Louis.

Thank you for your Administration's quick response to this catastrophe. We urge you to act as expeditiously as possible on this request.